

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

JANUARY 2005

INDIANA SENATE • 200 W. WASHINGTON ST. • INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA 46204

Top 40

Majority party creates list of vital bills

This week, the Indiana General Assembly began a new phase of the 2005 legislative session. The Senate passed 229 bills during the first half of session. These proposals now move to the House of Representatives where we hope they receive the thoughtful and civil discourse that the people expect and demand from their elected representatives.

Last week, the House minority caucus prevented just that when they abandoned their duty to represent the people of Indiana and walked out on a crucial deadline day, effectively killing 132 bills. We hope to still resurrect many of these good ideas as the second half of the legislative process get underway; however, legislative rules may prevent many of those important proposals from becoming law. Despite the standoff, the House leadership has come up with a list of bills it wishes to revive.

I. Promote Government Reform and Ethics

- HB 1002: Inspector General and State Ethics Reform. Creates the office of the inspector general, and allows the commission to refer a matter for investigation by the inspector general. Mandates a one year waiting period before a former state officer, employee, or special state appointee may accept compensation as: (1) a lobbyist; or (2) an employee of an entity that the former state officer, employee, or special state appointee negotiated with, regulated, supervised, or licensed.

- HB 1439: Voter Identification. Voter must provide proof of identification at the polls in order to vote. Must be state issued ID. Specifies that a voter who is unable or declines to produce proof of identification at the polls receives a provisional ballot if the voter signs the affidavit required for a provisional ballot.

II. Create Jobs and Revive Indiana's Economy

- HB 1034: Daylight Saving Time. Requires Indiana to observe daylight saving time throughout the state.

- HB 1245: Coal Gasification Tax Credit. Provides an income tax credit for placing into service an integrated coal gasification power plant located in Indiana.

- HB 1279: Brownfields. Establishes a procedure for an owner of a brownfield to petition the department of local government finance to waive or reduce the outstanding charges against the brownfield listed on the tax duplicate.

SEN. ROBERT GARTON



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upcoming events in the indiana statehouse

- April 11 - Last Day for 3rd Reading of House Bills in the Senate
- April 14 - Last Day for 3rd Reading of Senate Bills in the House
- April 29 — Last scheduled day of the 2005 legislative session

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TOP 40 CONTINUED

Important Legislation in the General Assembly

- HB 1283: Property Tax Abatement. Permits a city, town, or county to approve property tax abatements for new manufacturing equipment, new research and development equipment, new logistical distribution equipment, or new information technology equipment anywhere within its jurisdiction instead of limiting those abatements to economic revitalization areas. Expands I-69 corridor.

- HB 1409: Broadens EDGE Credits for Small Businesses. Changes the minimum ratio of local incentives to EDGE credits from \$1.50 per \$3 of EDGE credits to \$1 per \$2 of EDGE credits. Reduces the number of employees the applicant must employ from 200 to 75.

- HB 1724: Agriculture Enterprise Zones. Permits the enterprise zone board to designate certain areas as agricultural enterprise zones. Provides that real and personal property located in a zone may be assessed for payment of property taxes committed to funding or paying bonded indebtedness or certain lease rentals.

III. Control Government Spending and Taxation

- HB 1301: Property Taxes. Postpones from 2005 to 2006 the implementation of annual adjustments of real property assessed value. Phases in the annual adjustment determined for 2006. Provides a property tax credit, phased out over four years, based on the amount by which a property tax increase resulting from a general reassessment of a homestead exceeds 75%.

- HB 1367: Property Tax Assessment of FarmLand. Sets an agricultural land base rate of \$880 per acre for property tax assessments in 2005 and 2006. Establishes the method by which the Department of Local Government Finance sets the agricultural land base rate for assessments in later years.

IV. Protect Hoosier Families/Tough on Crime

- HB 1223: Fighting Methamphetamine. Requires a

law enforcement agency that terminates the operation of a methamphetamine laboratory to report the existence and location of the laboratory to the state police, fire department, and county health department. Requires a law enforcement agency that discovers a child less than 14 years of age at a methamphetamine laboratory to notify the division of family and children.

- HB 1743: Child Caseworker Caseload Ratios. Establishes maximum caseload ratios for child protection caseworkers. Requires local child protection services to maintain sufficient staff to comply with the maximum caseload ratios.

V. Expand Education Choices for Hoosier Families

- HB 1009: School Vouchers and No Child Left Behind Act. Allows a student who attends a public school that is found to be in need of improvement to attend a charter school not in need of improvement if the federal Department of Education approves a competition for states to receive matching funds for charter school facility financing. Directs the department of education to pursue federal grant opportunities and to create matching state funds for low income students to attend private schools.

- HB1566: Education Savings Deduction. Provides that up to \$2,000 in contributions to a family college savings account may be deducted from adjusted gross income.

- HB 1797: Higher Education. Requires the commission for higher education to establish standards for the transfer of courses between state educational institutions. Requires state educational institutions granting four year degrees to offer to students a four year baccalaureate degree completion guarantee program. Creates the guaranteed tuition rate program. Creates a procedure for state educational institution tuition and fee increases. Specifies that active duty military personnel stationed in Indiana are eligible for resident tuition rates.

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